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ABSTRACT

An analysis of survey responses from a sample of dietetic technicians on competency characteristics for their occupation is presented in this document. (Dietetic technician is one of seventeen occupation groups included in this research.) The competencies are reported in five categories: (1) those competencies selected by the respondents from a list of 720 health occupations competencies; (2) the percentage rate which respondents reported practicing the competency item; (3) type of competency (indicated as the performance of a physical skill or action, or an understanding or mental comprehension); (4) use frequency (daily, weekly, monthly); and (5) training needed to achieve proficiency in that competency (formal instruction, demonstration, on-the-job). (The final report of the survey is available as CE 018 899. Survey results for the other occupational groups are also available--see CE 018 900-916.) (JH)

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Forward

This volume contains detailed competency characteristics collected in the vocational education research project entitled "Common Intracluster Competencies Needed in Selected Occupational Clusters - Health Occupations".

The information herein summarizes the responses of one of the seventeen occupational groups included in the research. The study included 720 individual competency items, both skills and understandings, which were presented to a sample of health occupation employees in Iowa and/or the central states area.

The data included in this volume summarizes the responses by those surveyed in the occupation listed on the cover.

Description of the Data

Essentially five competency characteristics are presented on the pages that follow. The total number of respondents to the survey is indicated following the table heading in the format N=__. Those characteristics include:

1. Competencies reported by respondents -

   The first column is a list of the competencies reported by respondents. Each competency carries the item number from the comprehensive listing utilized in the research process and as presented in the main report. Competencies not reported by respondents were not included to preserve space.

2. Practice rate -

The second column presents the percentage rate which respondents reported practicing the competency item. Practice rates of fifteen percent or less are indicated by an asterisk (*) and lack additional characteristic percentage computations because of their small cell size.

The remaining three competency characteristics represent responses of those who indicated that they practiced the competency.

3. Type of competency -

Columns three and four indicate the percentage of the type of competency which respondents indicated characterized the nature of their activity. An "S" indicates the performance of a physical skill or physical action, while a "U" reflects that an understanding or mental comprehension only was needed for the competency. (See the Glossary in the main report for working definitions of skill and understanding).

4. Use frequency -

Distribution of the percentage of frequency which competencies were practiced, for those who reported possession of them, is presented in columns five, six, and seven. "D" in column five represents a competency exercised daily, "W" in column six represents a weekly frequency, while "M" in column seven reflects monthly or less frequent practice.

5. Training needed -

The final three columns summarize the percentage distribution of the nature of training which respondents felt was necessary to achieve proficiency in the competency. The "I" in column eight represents formal instruction, such as would be presented in an academic setting. A "D" (column nine) indicates that a demonstration of how to perform the competency is all that is needed to achieve proficiency, while "E" in column ten indicates that on-the-job exposure is adequate for developing the competency.

Rounded, whole-number percent figures were used in the preparation of this report, since the findings were considered to represent trends more than finite characteristics. Multiple column computations were forced to total 100 percent by the rounding process except for those items where equal numbers in each of three columns were reported. In those cases the total of 99 percent reflects all responses reported.

Using the Data

Possible uses and applications of the data are presented in the main body of the research report. The material presented in this supplementary volume will be of most value to those concerned solely with the occupational field which is treated herein.

Competency Characteristics Reported by DIETETIC TECHNICIAN (by percent) N=70

Competency	Practice Rate	Type		Use Frequency			Training Needed		
		S	U	D	W	M	I	D	E
1. Seek guidance to improve performance in patient care.	76	27	73	33	24	43	38	10	52
2. Participate in/conduct demonstrations of procedures and equipment (in-service).	72	73	27	4	24	72	52	36	12
3. Orient new personnel to unit facilities, routines and other personnel.	79	65	35	5	14	81	14	41	45
4. Advise health professionals on the technicalities and procedures involved in operating special equipment.	22	50	50	0	13	87	37	37	26
5. Practice established routines and policies of the health care facility.	83	54	46	96	4	0	26	13	61
6. Supervise subordinates within the health care facility.	64	39	61	91	4	5	64	0	36
7. Give "on the job" instruction.	86	64	36	40	8	52	36	36	28
8. Advise staff concerning medical jurisprudence.	17	17	83	17	0	83	83	0	17
9. Develop criteria for the selection of records for review and retention.	45	31	69	0	8	92	55	0	45
10. Establish work priorities and schedule work assignments.	56	50	50	58	32	10	39	6	55

	Competency	Practice Rate	Type		Use Frequency			Training Needed		
			S	U	D	W	M	I	D	E
11.	Identify operational deficiencies and recommend corrections.	90	23	77	20	20	60	56	8	36
12.	Evaluate subordinate employee performance.	61	41	59	29	5	66	74	11	15
13.	Develop job description.	72	38	62	0	5	95	84	5	11
14.	Consult with health professionals on purchasing/ constructing/using special appliances.	28	10	90	0	0	100	60	30	10
15.	Interview/evaluate/hire prospective personnel.	55	56	44	6	6	88	63	13	24
16.	Maintain standards of employees' personal hygiene as related to job performance.	50	39	61	78	0	22	56	6	38
17.	Insure that all subordinates are on duty.	55	50	50	81	0	19	6	19	75
18.	Attend and participate on staff meetings.	75	37	63	6	38	56	26	15	59
19.	Develop policies and establish departmental procedures.	76	32	68	14	0	86	80	5	15
20.	Inform personnel of new or changed policies and procedures.	64	35	65	13	30	57	41	5	54
21.	Provide liaison between doctor and other professional associates.	52	20	80	27	20	53	50	7	43
22.	Review and approve employee's payroll time and salary.	47	53	47	7	40	53	8	31	61

	Competency	Practice Rate	Type		Use Frequency			Training Needed		
			S	U	D	W	M	I	D	E
23.	Coordinate work schedules with other departments.	59	53	47	24	6	70	24	12	64
24.	Teach special procedures to department members/ students/health care professionals.	58	57	43	33	19	48	80	10	10
25.	Teach safety techniques as needed.	69	60	40	0	21	79	37	42	21
26.	Develop hospital disaster plan.	17	0	100	17	0	83	33	17	50
27.	Inform personnel of potential hazards in their working areas.	72	33	67	19	24	57	38	19	43
28.	Demonstrate tact in giving and withholding information concerning patient care/operations of the health care facility.	64	30	70	64	14	22	52	5	43
29.	Represent the department and facility at community meetings.	41	42	58	0	0	100	59	8	33
30.	Attend meetings and participate in community activities related to doctor's practice.	17	50	50	17	17	66	67	0	33
31.	Arrange meetings, conferences/travel accomodations.	41	50	50	0	27	73	27	27	46
32.	Assist in the orientation of volunteers, students and new staff.	61	50	50	10	19	71	60	5	35
33.	Recommend materials to be used in training volunteers.	31	22	78	0	0	100	50	12	38

	Competency	Practice Rate	Type S	Type U	Use Frequency D	Use Frequency W	Use Frequency M	Training Needed I	Training Needed D	Training Needed E
34.	Train volunteers in specific techniques.	*								
35.	Participate in public relation activities as directed.	66	42	58	6	6	88	50	12	38
36.	Conduct tours of facilities.	31	45	55	0	9	91	0	30	70
37.	Obtain and deliver supplies for patient's entertainment or recreation.	17	60	40	20	0	80	0	20	80
43.	Prepare food so patient may feed self or feed the patient.	41	58	42	55	0	45	9	36	55
45.	Explain discharge diet instructions to patients on order from physician.	76	55	45	50	14	36	82	5	13
46.	Assist in resolving patient complaints.	67	46	54	50	29	21	29	17	54
48.	Teach patient/family, preventative general health care.	36	46	54	46	23	31	85	7	8
51.	Obtain information from patient/family.	66	53	47	61	6	33	44	22	34
60.	Explain therapy procedures in lay terms.	*								
61.	Explain follow-up services to patient.	*								
62.	Help patient develop positive attitudes toward their illness/confinement.	33	42	58	83	8	9	75	8	17

	Competency	Practice Rate	Type		Use Frequency			Training Needed		
			S	U	D	W	M	I	D	E
63.	Assist in establishing a comfortable relationship between the patient and the health care professional.	55	50	50	62	19	19	38	24	38
64.	Observe negative/positive physical and emotional responses to treatments, medications, nursing care,etc.	33	50	50	75	17	8	67	0	33
65.	Interpret patient's signs, symptoms, behavior, etc.	45	31	69	85	7	8	77	8	15
66.	Identify strengths/weakness of care plan.	22	37	63	25	62	13	75	0	25
67.	Observe patient's general physical condition, appearance, and behavior.	52	27	73	71	14	15	43	7	50
68.	Observe, measure, and record patient fluid intake/output.	*								
69.	Record and chart vital signs, height, weight, and/or other conditions as directed by health care professional.	31	56	44	78	22	0	44	12	44
79.	Obtain charts of patients for whom information is requested.	*								
80.	Prepare patient record folder (chart).	19	29	71	100	0	0	50	0	50
81.	Transfer patient food order to patient records.	45	85	15	62	15	23	23	46	31
85.	Maintain and prepare productivity reports.	17	60	40	60	20	20	60	20	20

	Competency	Practice Rate	Type		Use Frequency			Training Needed		
			S	U	D	W	M	I	D	E
87.	Prepare daily census.	28	62	38	100	0	0	0	38	62
89.	Process mail and correspondence (both incoming and outgoing).	*								
91.	Prepare requests for vacation/sick leave.	31	44	56	22	0	78	11	22	67
92.	Prepare requisitions.	42	53	47	43	36	21	14	21	65
93.	Handle telephone calls.	69	75	25	90	5	5	0	35	65
95.	Prepare correspondence/report/summary (not forms).	45	54	46	31	23	46	29	12	59
100.	Communicate menu changes.	61	59	41	55	14	31	27	23	50
102.	Check/maintain charting of treatments and medications, procedures, orders, observations.	22	50	50	50	37	13	62	13	25
103.	Maintain personal information card index on each patient.	48	71	29	93	7	0	21	29	50
104.	Gather data to complete reports for government agencies.	17	67	33	0	17	83	33	17	50
107.	Operate office business machines.	21	67	33	67	33	0	17	33	50
111.	Maintain catalogs of supplies and equipment.	31	78	22	33	0	67	22	11	67
115.	Follow established procedure in filing incident reports.	45	46	54	8	0	92	8	31	61

	Competency	Practice Rate	Type S	Type U	Use Frequency D	Use Frequency W	Use Frequency M	Training Needed I	Training Needed D	Training Needed E
118.	Receive and record physician's verbal orders.	*								
130.	Receive patient census and menu tally and prepare diet orders.	47	53	47	65	0	35	69	12	19
135.	Prepare and give between-meal nourishment of liquids.	38	64	36	64	0	36	0	55	45
136.	Prepare and give solid foods.	25	56	44	75	0	25	45	33	22
151.	Evaluate adequacy of work space.	24	14	86	14	0	86	100	0	0
155.	Improvise or modify equipment for special requirements.	21	33	67	0	0	100	17	16	67
156.	Assemble late or hold food trays.	39	71	29	54	0	46	14	29	57
163.	Know and apply basic first aid techniques including artificial respiration and cardiac resuscitation.	*								
221.	Prepare statistical reports.	28	50	50	0	25	75	50	37	13
222.	Take/transcribe minutes of meetings.	22	100	0	0	0	100	25	25	50
223.	Inform and advise administration as to trends and significant data.	31	22	78	0	11	89	44	0	56
225.	Check records (charts) for deficiencies.	31	22	78	33	0	67	67	0	33

	Competency	Practice Rate	Type S	Type U	Use Frequency D	Use Frequency W	Use Frequency M	Training Needed I	Training Needed D	Training Needed E
230.	Abstract information from record (including medical audit).	*								
234.	Type information onto various forms.	*								
236.	Maintain daily production record.	*								
237.	Recommend policies for departmental functions.	34	30	70	0	0	100	56	0	44
279.	Operate audiovisual equipment, e.g., projector, recorder, etc.	*								
379.	Identify deviate swallowing patterns.	17	20	80	40	20	40	80	0	20
380.	Make/approve menu changes.	83	50	50	45	29	26	68	14	18
381.	Compute portions for modified diets.	76	50	50	77	5	18	72	9	19
382.	Weigh and measure where indicated to meet dietetic requirement.	44	44	56	67	0	33	28	36	36
383.	Tally order for tray line and production areas.	45	31	69	58	0	42	17	33	50
384.	Prepare menu slips and tray cards.	64	52	48	70	13	17	28	36	36
385.	Check menu with tray contents and correct where needed.	69	60	40	68	16	16	36	32	32
386.	Check meals for quality food service.	78	54	46	55	21	24	58	14	28
387.	Provide menu substitutions, second portions or special items for patient needs.	76	59	41	86	14	0	48	19	33

	Competency	Practice Rate	Type		Use Frequency			Training Needed		
			S	U	D	W	M	I	D	E
388.	Select recipes to be used.	67	46	54	38	13	49	62	14	24
389.	Review recipes and record adjustments at regular intervals.	72	48	52	10	38	52	75	10	15
390.	Calculate diets when necessary.	89	50	50	60	18	22	88	6	6
391.	Determine kinds and quantity of food needed.	69	50	50	62	14	24	70	10	20
392.	Determine use of carry-over food.	56	35	65	68	0	32	33	22	45
393.	Obtain nutrient analysis data on food products.	83	38	62	13	17	70	68	9	23
394.	Formulate objectives and goals of dietary department.	72	31	69	12	20	68	87	0	13
395.	Develop policies for coordinating dietary activities with other departments in the facility.	72	43	57	10	19	71	53	16	31
396.	Develop diet manual and keep updated.	61	36	64	5	5	90	100	0	0
397.	Plan menus.	79	52	48	22	22	56	81	5	14
398.	Verify nutritional adequacy of daily menu planning.	78	39	61	39	11	50	81	5	14
399.	Expand or decrease recipe quantity.	69	50	50	35	25	40	58	26	16

	Competency	Practice Rate	Type S	Type U	Use Frequency D	Use Frequency W	Use Frequency M	Training Needed I	Training Needed D	Training Needed E
400.	Calculate and plan diet patterns.	81	39	61	41	14	45	93	0	7
401.	Write therapeutic diets.	86	48	52	60	20	20	88	0	12
402.	Survey market for new food products.	69	36	64	12	16	72	48	9	43
403.	Test new food products.	76	64	36	0	14	86	35	35	30
404.	Exercise precautions in administering and handling potentially dangerous agents.	*								
572.	Evaluate progress of client during treatment sessions.	*								
586.	Review patient's clinical history.	58	38	62	62	10	28	71	5	24
622.	Recognize expected reactions to treatment.	*								
623.	Recognize complications of adverse reactions to treatments.	*								
624.	Minimize hazards throughout the health care facility.	*								
625.	Arrange equipment for convenient and safe use.	*								
634.	Knows routine for fire in patient area and demonstrates knowledge of procedures for securing the building and reassuring and aiding patients.	25	45	55	25	0	75	33	56	11

	Competency	Practice Rate	Type S	Type U	Use Frequency D	Use Frequency W	Use Frequency M	Training Needed I	Training Needed D	Training Needed E
638.	Help patient make contacts with various agencies within the community.	*								
641.	Instruct patient about available self-help devices.	*								
646.	Follow procedures in care of isolated patients.	22	63	37	12	0	88	0	37	63
651.	Direct patient to project completion by praise and encouragement.	17	60	40	40	60	0	20	40	40
653.	Adapt teaching techniques to capabilities of patient.	38	36	64	89	11	0	45	18	37
664.	Evaluate dietary habits and instruct patient on proper nutrition.	69	48	52	76	8	16	84	12	4
670.	Abstract simple data from patient's chart.	25	56	44	67	22	11	56	22	22
692.	Clean and maintain service area and equipment within area of responsibility.	17	33	67	50	0	50	17	17	66
693.	Order/inventory and store equipment and supplies.	24	100	0	29	57	14	43	14	43
695.	Verify performance of instruments/devices against manufacturer's specifications.	*								
696.	Determine if equipment needs repair.	17	33	67	50	0	50	0	33	67
697.	Schedule/perform maintenance on equipment.	*								
708.	Inspect all areas and rooms for proper housekeeping, temperature, and adequate supplies.	17	67	33	67	17	16	40	0	60

	Competency	Practice Rate	Type		Use Frequency			Training Needed		
			S	U	D	W	M	I	D	E
710.	Order foodstuffs according to established minimum and maximum stock levels or according to menu.	47	47	53	44	38	18	40	33	27
711.	Check and record temperatures of appliances/equipment.	21	67	33	33	17	50	0	50	50
713.	Check invoices against purchase orders.	28	63	37	37	26	37	13	74	13
714.	Organize storage areas for equipment, supplies, drugs.	*								
715.	Evaluate the effectiveness of sanitizing chemicals and sprays used.	21	50	50	0	0	100	67	33	0